Speech from the Throne

by

The Honourable Lloyd G. MacPhail
Lieutenant Governor

at the Opening of the

Second Session

of the

Fifty-Eighth General Assembly

of the Province of

Prince Edward Island

on

February 22, 1990

at 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

It is my privilege and honour, in the name of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, to welcome you to the Second Session of the Fifty-Eighth General Assembly of the Province of Prince Edward Island.

Since this House last met, the Province has completed its observance of the 125th Anniversary of the Charlottetown Conference. The many commemorative events touched all parts of the Island, involving most of us at one time or another. I would be remiss if I failed to take particular note of the truly remarkable performance of Rex McCarville as Sir John A. MacDonald during the many appearances of "The Fathers" in 1989. Another highlight of the anniversary celebrations was, of course, the visit of Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York. Memories of their charm and exuberance will remain with us for many years to come.

All Islanders are looking forward to February 1991 when Prince Edward Island will host Canada's showcase of amateur sport - the Canada Winter Games.

These Games will leave a legacy of recreation and sporting facilities, both new and upgraded, across the province.

I would like to extend best wishes to all those involved in the Games, our 1991 Provincial Team athletes and officials, and the thousands of community volunteers who will show their support leading up to and during the event. I think it is only appropriate that I extend, on behalf of My Government and the people of Prince Edward Island, thanks to the President of the Host Society, Mr. Orin Carver, for his dedication, leadership, and for his willingness to give so much of his valuable time in a volunteer manner.

With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members, I would like to make a personal observation. I expect that my term as Her Majesty's representative will conclude later this year and, when I leave public life, I shall cherish my long association with the Legislative Assembly. Better than most, I have an appreciation of the demands placed on you as Members and as Ministers of the Crown. Though issues may change, the stresses of legislating and of governing remain. I wish you well as you continue to grapple with the complexities of the 1990's.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

You resume your seats in this Assembly at a time when change is sweeping the world. Events of the past several months in Eastern Europe have demonstrated the irrepressible nature of the human spirit and the irresistible allure of our democratic institutions of Government. There, we witness daily, proof that a people cannot be denied freedom and the right to decide for themselves. As you begin your deliberations in this historic chamber, you should be ever mindful that your legitimacy and authority as legislators is given to you by the people of Prince Edward Island.

The events in Eastern Europe serve to remind us that democracy is a partnership. It is a partnership between those who are governed, and those whom they select to govern. It is a partnership between the Private and Public Sectors. It is a partnership which must be built on mutual respect and a spirit of compromise. It is this respect and compromise which enables the various partners in democracy to strike that essential balance between economic development and social equality, and between the rights of the individual and the rights of the community.

Balance and partnership have been the central themes of My Government. In each of the areas of Island life in which My Government is called upon to serve: in creating the environment for economic activity; in encouraging community and rural development; in protecting and enhancing our natural and cultural environment; in maintaining essential and equitable human services; and in providing sound fiscal management and responsive public services, My Government has approached its responsibilities with a full appreciation of its partnership role.

The recent economic and political upheaval in many of the Soviet Socialist Republics proves the folly of a state-planned and state-controlled approach to economic development. In a free enterprise economy like that of Prince Edward Island, it is normally considered the role of the private sector to actually plant the seeds of economic activity. It is the role of Government to provide a receptive and hospitable economic climate in which those seeds may flourish and grow.

This does not, of course, preclude government from using the various policy instruments at its disposal to shape economic development in a way which it feels is consistent with the greater public good.

My Government recognizes the vital importance of creating a suitable environment for economic development in the province. In all our primary resource industries, for example, we have worked to increase value to Island products, to reduce input costs, and to establish new markets.

Adding value to our primary products is possibly the greatest economic challenge facing Prince Edward Island in the 1990's. Certainly, when compared to other provinces, our record is poor. At present we add only one dollar through processing to every three dollars of agricultural production. If we were as successful as our neighbouring provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in this regard, we would add approximately $200 million to the Island economy on a yearly basis and create an additional 6,000 person years of employment.

During the past year, My Government has achieved some success in realizing this goal. The recent announcements by Cavendish Farms and McCain Foods to establish additional potato processing facilities in this province, combined with other initiatives such as the recently established Prestige Farms, will create hundreds of new jobs in rural P.E.I.

In addition, My Government has worked closely with our fish processors to increase value-added processing, to enhance quality, and to more effectively market their products. In 1990 fish plants at Murray Harbour and Summerside will not only re-open, but will process new fish products in addition to the traditional lines.

The major challenge that presently faces our Island lobster fishery is the increased competition for international markets. In response to this, My Government along with the Government of Canada and the industry, will closely monitor lobster inventories and develop appropriate promotional and marketing initiatives.

To further develop the mussel, salmon, clam, oyster and scallop fisheries, an Oyster Enhancement and Aquaculture Development Program will be initiated.

My Government realizes, Mr. Speaker, that the future of our agricultural industry depends on the extent to which young energetic Islanders see farming as a viable way of life. With this in mind, My Government will create a new Agricultural Development Corporation with a New Farmer Program as its centerpiece.

In addition to the established programs carried forward from its predecessor, the Land Development Corporation, the Agricultural Development Corporation will offer a new Farm Financial Management Program, and a Dairy Herd Insurance Program.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

The Potato Marketing Commission has performed well since it was established. For this, much credit must go to the dedicated producers who serve on the Commission; however, it is now time to move on. Accordingly, in July, elections will be held to set in place a new producer-controlled Potato Marketing Commodity Board to lead this important sector of our Island economy into the twenty-first century.

Mr. Speaker, all Prince Edward Islanders are familiar with the old adage "a penny saved is a penny earned." Nowhere is this more true than in the primary sectors of our economy. It is important to work toward reducing the input costs of primary producers. That is why My Government has accepted the challenge to make Prince Edward Island self-sufficient in protein over the next few years. Incentives will be made available to increase the production of soybeans, lupines, and a variety of other field crops. As well, a facility will be built to process by-products of our fishery, dairy and red meat industries into protein feeds.

Over the past number of years, Mr. Speaker, North American consumption of poultry meat has increased substantially. At the same time, however, local production of poultry has actually decreased to the point where we no longer produce enough to satisfy our own domestic consumer demand. In an effort to redress this imbalance in supply and demand, My Government is actively working with the private sector to secure a poultry processing plant in our province.

The horse industry contributes over 20 million dollars annually to the economy. The industry is a major employer in the agriculture sector providing many full and part-time jobs. With this in mind, a program has been designed that will provide assistance to the two major race tracks in the province enabling them to improve their physical facilities.

Since the early 1960's, tobacco has been an important cash crop, particularly in the Southern Kings and Queens area of our province. However, increasing concern about the relationship between smoking and health has forced a decline in the tobacco industry. To assist Island tobacco farmers to leave tobacco production, My Government will once again participate in the Tobacco Redux Program.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

Part of Government's role in creating a receptive climate for economic development is the provision of the infrastructure necessary to support business and industry.

Accordingly, in the coming year My Government plans to initiate the construction of a 25 megawatt co-generation plant in Charlottetown to generate electricity on a commercial level, and to provide district heating to the Greater Charlottetown Area. As well, a 5 megawatt diesel plant will be established to address the increased electrical demands of the Town of Summerside. This plant will also meet the district heating needs of the town. These two initiatives represent a total capital investment of approximately $80 million dollars.

The co-generation of heat and electricity is an integral part of My Government's efforts in the related fields of energy and forestry. The Charlottetown plant will provide a new market for the low quality and diseased wood which characterizes much of our Island wood supply. With the building of the plant, harvesting of this previously value-less wood will be viable, enabling the planting and growth of new disease-free forests. In concert with the establishment of the co-generation plant, therefore, the Provincial Reforestation Program will be expanded in order to reforest the harvested land.

It is important to point out, Mr. Speaker, that this major energy project is contingent upon the results of a comprehensive environmental assessment. If environmentally acceptable, this project will offer increased security of electrical power, and will create much needed employment in the plant and in our Island forests.

In keeping with our reputation as a world leader in alternate energy, My Government has recently entered into a new five year funding agreement with the Federal Government on energy efficiency and alternate energy development. Through this agreement, My Government will deliver a variety of new programs and services aimed at diversifying our energy supplies.

Furthermore, in our on-going efforts to assure security of conventional electrical energy supply, the existing submarine cable will be upgraded during the coming year, permitting a doubling of the quantity of electrical power that can be transmitted to our province.

My Government also recognizes, Mr. Speaker, that our economy depends on the quality of our transportation system. We have committed ourselves to the development of a first-class primary highway network to serve the needs of all Prince Edward Islanders. In order to realize this commitment, Government will substantially increase the Road Construction Program.

My Government has long been committed to upgrading and modernizing the facilities of Georgetown Shipyards. Over the past three years, the Shipyard has purchased new equipment which has resulted in a more efficient and productive operation. In addition to this, the shipyard has benefited from securing a multi-million dollar contract to construct three vessels for Usen Fisheries in Souris. Until now, however, the shipyard's potential has been limited by an inability to maintain or service large vessels.

Government recognizes the competitiveness of the shipbuilding industry, as well as current trends in the offshore fishery which will limit the demand for new ship construction. However, if the shipyard at Georgetown is to be competitive into the next decade, it must be prepared to take advantage of the opportunities that lie ahead in ship maintenance and repair.

With this in mind, My Government will initiate a multi-million dollar expansion and re-development program at the shipyard that will include, among other things, a 2,000 ton syncrolift system.

In the area of small business development, My Government will introduce a number of new initiatives in the year ahead, including the Small Business Information Line, the Rural Small Business Development Program, and the Quality Assurance/Quality Control Program.

In recognition of the potential for attracting foreign investment through the Federal Business Immigration Program, My Government has created a publicly-administered investment syndicate to be known as "The Island Fund". The proceeds from this fund will be used to finance strategic Economic Development Projects that are in the public interest.

My Government wishes to encourage science and technology, Mr. Speaker, through locally carried out research and develcpment. We are committed to discovery and innovation at home, as a means of improving Prince Edward Island's ability to compete. To this end, Government will introduce in the coming year a new program called "Innovations P.E.I.", which will award research and development grants to Island firms, educational institutions and Individuals.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

Tourism, based as it is on the natural, cultural and social attributes of the Province, now is regarded as one of our leading primary industries. My Government will continue its efforts to encourage growth in the tourism industry in all parts of the province.

More specifically, in the current year, a 50-room resort hotel with accompanying facilities will be constructed at Brudenell Provincial Park. A new 18 hole championship golf course will be developed at Lakeside in the Morell - St. Peter's area, and the Mill River Resort will be expanded to include winter recreation facilities and an Aquatic/Fitness Centre. As well, a new indoor swimming pool and health centre will be constructed at Montague to serve the recreational and fitness needs of Islanders and visitors in the Kings and Southern Queens area.

These initiatives will provide new meeting, convention and recreational facilities, encourage growth in our motor coach business, and contribute to the development of the shoulder tourism season.

My Government has recently completed construction of a world-class Nordic and Biathlon Ski Centre at Brookvale Provincial Park. The nearby Alpine Facility also is undergoing major improvements, including the construction of a new lodge which is nearing completion. A new chair-lift will be installed, and the height of the hill will be increased to provide longer runs. In our on-going efforts to improve Provincial Parks, the facilities at Red Point and Lord Selkirk Provincial Parks will be upgraded and expanded.

My Government continues to identify a yearly theme in its tourism promotions. In 1990, we are focusing on the Irish culture and heritage of Prince Edward Island. Our theme, "We're akin to Ireland", is an invitation for visitors to become acquainted with the Irish traditions and cultural heritage of a Province that was once named "New Ireland".

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

We recognize that community development is best achieved through an active partnership between local community leaders and their governments, both municipal and provincial. We also recognize that community development itself has many dimensions, including the provision of a broad array of community and cultural services to local residents.

My Government will table during this Session of the Legislature a *Strategy for Rural Development*. This document will rely upon the advice and viewpoints of more than eighty community groups from across the Island who presented briefs.

The strategy will put forward a vision for rural Prince Edward Island, identify development needs, and recommend an administrative process for achieving rural development objectives.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

My Government acknowledges the important role played by the 88 municipalities across the province in the delivery of essential programs and services.

During the past year the Provincial - Municipal Support Grant Program has undergone a comprehensive review. After careful study My Government will significantly increase the municipal grants program in the next fiscal year.

The City of Charlottetown and the Town of Summerside are the two primary service centers in our province. Because of the high traffic loads in these urban communities, a one-time Urban Paving Program has been developed to assist these two areas in meeting their street maintenance needs.

Residential development in many small rural communities is being hindered due to the shortage of suitable building lots. Developers simply cannot attain the financial returns in many local communities to justify the cost of establishing new subdivisions. In the coming year, My Government will take new initiatives to assist rural communities in making available affordable building lots.

The residents of Summerside and Eastern Prince County are without a community theatre facility in which to stage live performances. During the coming year My Government, with the expected assistance of the Government of Canada, will participate in a major expansion to the existing Eptek Centre on the town's waterfront.

When completed, the Summerside Events Centre will contribute significantly to the social and cultural life of the entire East Prince Region and serve as a venue for summer entertainment; thereby making Summerside a more attractive tourist destination.

My Government continues to offer decentralized services in all regions of the province. In the coming year much-needed expansion of government services facilities will be undertaken in Souris and O'Leary for the benefit of the residents in the eastern and western regions of the province. In Souris the expansion will provide for a provincial court room, community meeting rooms, and additional offices to house employees of various government departments.

A new building will be constructed in Kensington in the coming year to provide the necessary space to accommodate staff of the new Potato Services Division, the Grain Elevators Corporation, as well as the Agricultural Chemical Storage Facilities.

My Government will relocate the Community Library Division of the Department of Education from West Royalty to the Community of Morell. It is Government's present intention to have this relocation completed in 1993.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

Les Acadiens de l'Île possèdent un riche et unique patrimoine. Mon gouvernement participer à la construction d'un nouveau Musée acadien à Miscouche pour remplacer l'installation existante qui s'est détériorée au fil des ans.

Le coût total de ce projet se situe à 1,5 millions de dollars.

La 11e finale des Jeux de l'Acadie se déroulera dans la région Évangline de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard du 28 juin au 1er juillet 1990. C'est la première fois que ces Jeux ont à lieu l'extérieur du Nouveau-Brunswick. Environ 1 200 athlètes des trois Provinces maritimes participeront à huit disciplines sportives. L'organisation des Jeux, pour lesquels on a réaménagé et construit des installations sportives, demande la collaboration de plus de 1 000 bénévoles.

Mon gouvernement a récemment terminé une étude dans l'intention de déterminer le besoin des services en français dans les hôpitaux de l'Île et prévoit obtenir de l'aide financière en vertu de l'Entente-cadre sur la promotion des langues officielles pour mettre en oeuvre les recommandations de l'étude. Cette initiative permettra aux habitants francophones de l'Île de recevoir des services de santé dans leur langue.

My Government is working with the Sir Andrew MacPhail Foundation of Orwell, and the MacPhail descendants, to preserve and find an appropriate use for the Sir Andrew MacPhail historic property. To realize its stated commitment, Government will contribute the necessary seed capital to make the MacPhail residence and grounds a valuable historic site.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

Prince Edward Islanders recognize the importance of community-controlled financial enterprise, and the work of volunteer Islanders in the Credit Union System. Through amendments to the *Credit Union Act*, a Prince Edward Island Credit Union Deposit Insurance Corporation will be created. This will enable local credit unions to more easily raise capital, and at the same time provide a measure of financial protection similar to that enjoyed by larger financial institutions.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

We recognize that our ability to promote economic development and to encourage community and rural development will depend to a large extent on our willingness to protect and enhance our environment. We further recognize that environmental protection and enhancement is best achieved through an active partnership among local community leaders, industry, and government.

We recognize that the economic growth of our province is dependent on the quality of our air, land, and water. These are the natural resources upon which our principal industries of agriculture, fishing, tourism, food processing, and aquaculture are based. With this in mind, My Government will increase the professional and technical resources of the Department of the Environment to assist it in carrying out its mandate.

In an attempt to better educate young Islanders about the Island's natural environment, a Prince Edward Island Young Environmentalists Program will be developed. This program will provide meaningful work experience to students on projects such as river, stream, and beachfront enhancement as well as parks and roadside cleanup efforts.

The Environment Services Assistance Program will also be expanded to better address the demands from communities for assistance in constructing or expanding central sewer and water systems.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

Prince Edward Island can only build upon its reputation as a supplier of food products by ensuring consumers high quality. In the coming year, My Government will initiate a new Quality Assurance and Food Safety Program at the Food Technology Centre. This program will employ microbiological screening and other pesticide analysis techniques.

My Government also believes that farming practices should be in harmony with our environment. Accordingly a Pesticide Application Training and Certification Program will be designed to ensure the proper and safe use of pesticides. A proper storage depot for unwanted chemicals also will be established.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

My Government recently approved a comprehensive plan for the Cavendish area. The plan will allow for the orderly and controlled development of Cavendish as a unique summer community, while protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

Government will assist the local planning committee in the implementation of the plan. Moreover, amendments to the *Municipalities Act* will be introduced, allowing residents, landowners and government to address environmental servicing and other needs of the Cavendish region.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

Our Island society is not immune to the increased pressures on our families that all too often lead to family breakdown, emotional problems, and tensions within family relationships. My Government is committed to the strengthening of Island families. Furthermore, we realize that the strengthening of families must always be a shared mission for government, carried out in partnership with churches, schools, professionals, families, community agencies, and volunteer groups.

The teen years are a crucial time in the development of our young people. The adolescent is particularly vulnerable to changes in our society. Many teens require special support from family, the local community, and government. In the coming year a comprehensive program will be developed to provide services to our adolescents.

Additional resources will be provided at the local level to assist adolescents within their own community. New funding will be made available to our group homes, to improve safety and security for both staff and residents.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

In response to recommendations outlined in the Report of the Welfare Assistance Review Committee, the clothing allowance for short-term financial assistance clients will be re-instated. Approximately 1000 families will benefit from this provision of equity within the Welfare Assistance Program.

The wage exemption policy will also be dramatically revised to encourage welfare assistance recipients to seek employment. The exemption will be calculated at the time a person applies for welfare assistance and will continue for as long as the person continues to work. In addition, the exemption will provide incentives for both part-time and full-time employment.

My Government recognizes that in our province there are a number of children who, for whatever reason, are unable to remain with their natural parents. It is essential that the community at large provide these children with a caring home environment.

Over the years, a network of foster homes has developed across the province. At present, many foster parents have to use their own personal funds to supplement the rates that are paid by the Province. In the coming year, basic rates will be increased for those families who willingly accept other children into their home.

My Government recognizes the success and value of the Home Care and Support Program in assisting many Islanders to remain in, or return to, their own homes during illness. In keeping with its commitment to community based services, a substantial increase in resources will be provided to this program.

My Government values the contribution of community organizations and agencies in meeting the varied human and social needs of Islanders. In recognition of the cost of delivering services to individuals in need, new or expanded funding will be made available to a number of community agencies that include the Catholic and Protestant Family Services Bureaus, the Rape and Sexual Assault Crisis Centre, the Turning Point Program, the Prince Edward Island Transition House Association, New Directions in Summerside, and Tremploy in Charlottetown. This funding will enable these organizations to expand the services they offer individuals and families.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

My Government will once again provide funding to assist hospitals to more adequately meet their acute care nursing service needs. In keeping with its stated commitment, My Government will also increase staffing in our manors to ensure that residents' needs are being met.

Many Island hospitals are experiencing considerable difficulty in purchasing new equipment. Accordingly, additional resources have been made available to hospitals to purchase essential diagnostic and health care equipment.

Also, in the year ahead major renovations to the Western Hospital in Alberton, and the Community Hospital in O'Leary will commence.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

My Government will adopt a new philosophy of public education. The new philosophy will guide my Department of Education as it continues to implement the *Plan of Action* and revise and develop programs for our public schools. It will provide the essential base for the planning necessary to ensure the school system responds to the needs of students and the community.

A Provincial Consultative Committee on Education will be established in the coming year. This Committee will serve as a general advisory body to the Minister. The Committee will also serve as a forum where issues of mutual concern can be discussed in order to ensure that quality programs are provided to our children.

The start of formal schooling is a crucial time for all children. Large differences in class size, the specialized need of some children and variations in readiness for entering school make grade one a particularly difficult year. In the coming year, additional grade one teachers will be made available to assist schools across the province in providing all children the best possible introduction to school life.

Over the past three years my Department of Education has made significant progress in improving the resources to support students with special needs. New funding will be made available in the coming year to continue that development.

Library resources continue to play a particularly important role in support of the curriculum and in the motivation of students. In recognition of this, a special grant will be made available to assist schools in upgrading their library resources.

It is important that every young Islander has access to post-secondary education opportunities. In the coming year, the bursary available to post-secondary students will be increased to help ease the financial burden on students and their families.

The School Construction Program announced last year will be continued. During the year, construction will begin on a new elementary school in Cornwall and on a new French School and Cultural Centre in Charlottetown. Additions, extensions, and renovations will be carried out at Birchwood and Queen Charlotte Junior High Schools and at Parkside and Glen Stewart Elementary Schools. Construction on a new elementary school to serve the North Shore will be completed, and the planning and design work will be completed for major renovations and additions to Colonel Gray and Charlottetown Rural High Schools. As well, planning and design work will begin for a new elementary school at Borden.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

My Government will continue to develop and implement public policy initiatives that will enhance the quality of the work environment in our province.

My Government proposes to amend the *Labour Act* to increase the number of paid holidays for Island workers; to expand the capacity of the Labour Relations Board to deal with unfair labour practice complaints; and to bring maternity and adoption based provisions in line with the new benefit period under the *Unemployment Insurance Act*.

In the past, a number of hard-working Island men and women have gone unpaid because their employer has gone into receivership. In this Session of the Legislature, My Government will ask members to approve amendments to the *Labour Act* which will strengthen the abilities of employees in such situations to recover unpaid wages.

Amendments will also be proposed to the *Workers' Compensation Act* to increase the amount of payments to the dependents of a worker whose death results from injuries at the workplace.

The provision of the *Pay Equity Act* will be extended to the broader public sector to include school boards, hospitals, the University of Prince Edward Island and Holland College.

In the coming year the Industrial Relations Council will complete its review of the *Labour Act* and present its finding and recommendations.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

My Government is proud of the contribution made by the Prince Edward Island Housing Corporation to the improvement of Island housing conditions over the past few years. New approaches will be identified to address the housing needs of the coming decade. Our population is aging, bringing with it new challenges. There is a new and stronger focus on groups having special needs. Technology is changing, the interest and capabilities of the voluntary sector is growing, and there is an increasing desire to make wise use of our limited land base for residential development. These and other changes to our housing environment call for innovative and creative approaches to housing for the 1990's.

This year, more than 120 new family and senior citizen housing units will be constructed in various locations across the province. Many of these will be built in partnership with the Federal Government and non-profit community organizations.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

The successful development of public policy and the delivery of government services to the residents of our province demand an effective, efficient, and responsive public service. Public servants are there to serve; however, their effectiveness depends on motivation, sound management practices, training, and development opportunities, as well as accountability and performance measurement. Although we are a small province, we are not immune to the dramatic changes taking place in the world of work.

My Government will work in partnership with our Civil Service Commission and the various public sector unions to ensure the continued development of our Provincial Public Sector Employees.

My Government recognizes that a critical ingredient in the effective delivery of service to citizens is the quality of its executive personnel. To achieve this end, an Executive Development Program will be established to provide planned and meaningful development experiences, including both Management Training and Development Assignments.

Financial assistance will be provided to a number of Island residents pursuing post-graduate or other specialized studies in areas of the public service where it is difficult to recruit qualified applicants. This will provide job opportunities for Island graduates, while helping departments meet their needs for professional staff.

In order that the Public Service is more representative of the population, My Government has placed emphasis on providing accessibility to employment for qualified persons with disabilities. In the past year alone over one hundred persons were interviewed regarding employment opportunities; many of these were appointed to long-term and permanent positions within the Public Service.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

Throne speeches traditionally are directed at the province as a whole, and speak to individual groups or communities only when new initiatives are being planned. However, it is fitting in this throne speech that the plight of one particular Island community be addressed.

The people of Summerside and the East Prince Region were dealt a harsh and unexpected blow with the Federal Government's announced closure of CFB Summerside in April of last year. My Government pays tribute to the citizens of Summerside, and their community leaders, for the courageous and thoughtful manner in which they have weathered this economic storm. While their confidence understandably has been shaken, their spirit has never wavered, and in this, all Prince Edward Islanders can take pride.

The storm is not yet over, Mr. Speaker, but My Government is convinced that in the weeks ahead major announcements will be forthcoming, designed to offset the loss of federal employment which the base closure will produce. The Prime Minister has assured My First Minister that a plan is on the Federal Government's immediate agenda.

When these initiatives are finally made known, they will have come as a result of long and ardent federal-provincial negotiations in which My Government has been assisted by the Provincial Task Force and the Town of Summerside. Most of all, however, they will have come as a result of the resilience and undying spirit of the people of Summerside and the East Prince Region.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

In addition to the measures already outlined, you will be asked to consider a number of Legislative proposals including:

- a *Plant Health Act*
- a *Court Security Act*
- a *Personal Property Security Act*, and
- an *Engineering Technology Act*

as well as amendments to:

- the *Dairy Industry Act*
- the *Environmental Protection Act*
- the *Petroleum Products Act*
- the *Adoption Act*
- the *Insurance Act*
- the *Provincial Court Act*
- the *Pay Equity Act*, and
- the *Architects' Act*

You will be asked to appropriate the funds for the services and payments required by this Assembly.

The Public Accounts and the reports of the various departments and agencies of My Government for the year ending March 31, 1989, will be tabled for your information. The interim Report, forecasting Estimated Revenues and Expenditures for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1990, and estimates of revenues and expenditures for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 1990, will be presented for your consideration.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

My Government has put before you a substantive program of legislation and program initiatives touching on every area of Island life. It is a program of action. It is also a program built on the principles of balance and partnership. It is a program designed to serve Prince Edward Island during a time of both stability and impending change.

Without question, Mr. Speaker, Prince Edward Island enters the decade of the 1990's in good economic health. We begin this last decade of the twentieth century with an environment that remains both beautiful and natural. And our strong sense of community has prevailed, even through a period of unparalled change.

We live in a constantly changing environment, and we must be attuned to change. Certainly, it is now clear that the environment of federal financial transfers to this province and to individual Islanders is changing. For a small province like ours, this changing fiscal environment means that we must strive, harder than ever, to become self-reliant and resourceful. We must harness our own human and natural resources more effectively to generate economic development.

My Government will, therefore, place a great deal of emphasis, in the coming year, on broadening our primary industries and encouraging business and industry to be created and expanded in every region of the province.

Our Island province must reach out to an increasingly competitive world marketplace, one that demands a new variety of product.

We can be confident in our knowledge that Prince Edward Island produces the finest quality agricultural and fishery products in the world. We can be confident, but we cannot be smug. We must be more creative and innovative in our new product development and packaging designs. We must then promote and market more actively and more aggressively in order to grow.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

While future economic development is essential, it must not be a single-minded objective of Government. We cannot neglect our human, social and environmental responsibilities. My Government is committed to balanced development, appropriate to our people and our province.

We are committed, Mr. Speaker, to good government built on a multitude of partnerships and alliances with Islanders.

But above all, Mr. Speaker, My Government is committed to a stronger Prince Edward Island, better equipped to deal with the shifts in national fiscal policy, and better able to support its citizens.

May Divine Providence guide you in your deliberations.